

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOVEMENT

The ISM is an open platform for cooperation, coordination, communication, and collaboration between different individuals and groups involved with the struggle to reclaim education. It is the people and groups that use the ISM who write collective statements, synergize efforts, coordinate, make signs and symbols, and continually expand the horizons of the struggle to emancipate education.

It was initiated during the coordinations of the International Day of Action against the Commercialization of Education on November 5th 2008.

The ISM is generally open to everyone (whether students/pupils, parents, lecturers/faculty, or staff/workers) who supports our collective struggle and has always been and will always be independent of any political party, union, or other institution. Due to the nature of platforms nobody can represent or speak for the ISM as a whole. Nonetheless the international joint statement (see next page) currently endorsed by 100 groups in more than 40 countries gives an idea of what many people and groups connected to the ISM stand for. Last but not least it is important to know that the ISM itself has no financial capabilities, only individuals or groups connected to it might do so.

Among others the communication infrastructure consists of the following tools:

- *website:* www.ism-global.net
- *mailing lists:* e.g. global list with ~ 1,500 subscribed addresses
- regular global *chat meetings*
- *pages/groups on facebook*
- a channel on *twitter* [[@ISM030](https://twitter.com/ISM030)]; *youtube* [[/united4education](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1w0d1struggle) + [#1world1struggle](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1w0d1struggle)]

Various activities such as the "Spring of Resistance" [March-May 2011] as well as the "Global Weeks of Action for Education" [Nov. 7-20th 2011] were initiated and coordinated on the platform so far.

Currently things are taken to the next level with the ongoing coordinations for the

GLOBAL EDUCATION STRIKE [Oct.18th & Nov.14-21st 2012]!!



~ one world - one struggle ~

General contact: united.for.education@gmail.com

Global mailing list: international_students_movement@lists.riseup.net

CALL TO ACTION

GLOBAL EDUCATION STRIKE

OCTOBER 18TH & NOVEMBER 14-21ST 2012

We are calling for a Global Education Strike. It is the first time that an education strike is being coordinated worldwide. We will UNITE in solidarity, because no matter where we live, we face the same struggle against national state and profit driven interests, and their hold on education. Increasing tuition fees, budget cuts, outsourcing, school closures, as well as other phenomena are linked to an increasing commercialization and privatization of education. Only by uniting globally will we be able to overcome these and enable free emancipatory education for all.

We are all struggling against cuts in education. Most of us are drowning in student debt. The increasing pressure to perform just makes us sick and the restrictions on education and ever-increasing tuition fees, among other barriers, make us angry! Everyone must have access to education no matter their monetary or social status. We have had enough of the pressure to measure everything - even the unmeasurable! We are sick and tired of competitiveness being the only criteria dictating everything! It is about time that we do something about this together - UNITED!

We are all people affected by the increasing commodification and commercialization of education. This is vividly portrayed by the symptoms affecting us, such as schools and universities being de-democratized and the further implementation of more hierarchical structures. The education market and competition between institutions is being facilitated by governments around the world, which are increasingly privatizing education, health care, and all other social needs.

In June 2012 alone, we recorded 45 protests in more than 40 cities in connection with the struggle for free emancipatory education. Governments have chronically underfunded the institutions, often using the current economic crisis as a pretext. They promote 'solutions' such as: rankings encouraging competition; closing schools that 'underperform'; increasing student enrollment without increasing faculty, staff, and student resources; outsourcing everything that can be outsourced; promoting elite institutions. All these 'solutions' are steps towards an increasing commodification and privatization of education, which also has negative impacts on the conditions for teaching and learning.

The education market and national states require that profits take priority over developing the capabilities for emancipatory thinking. Both need obeying 'citizens', consumers and cheap labour, not emancipated individuals living self-determined lives. We are being mechanized to function as cogs in the capitalist machine. We are socialized to compete with our fellows on every level. Our creativity, our energy and our free spirits are actively being crushed by the educational institution.

The education system within capitalism consists mainly of training factories which are supposed to produce human capital for the exploitation on the labour market as well as knowledge to be commodified. To point out these links and interrupt this mode of production we herewith call for the closing down of educational institutions worldwide during the Global Education Strike.

Fight back! Join in the GLOBAL EDUCATION STRIKE.

All justice begins with knowledge. Stand with us as one this October and November, and the whole world will hear our call to Reclaim Education. www.ism-global.net

INTERNATIONAL JOINT STATEMENT

Around the world over the past decade students, pupils, teachers, parents and employees have been protesting against the increasing commercialization and privatization of public education, and fighting for free and emancipatory education. Many of us use the *International Student Movement* as a self-managed platform initiated to exchange information, to network and to co-ordinate protests at both the international and the global levels. Since the ISM platform was initiated in November 2008 various global days and weeks of action were coordinated. We strive for structures based on direct participation and non-hierarchical organization through collective discussion and action. Anyone who identifies with the struggle against the privatization of public education, and for free and emancipatory education can join and participate on as well as shape the platform!

The following aims unite us worldwide:

What are we struggling against?

- The effects of the current economic system on people and education systems:
 - tuition fees or any form of fees which exclude people from accessing and equally participating in education
 - student debt
 - public education aligned to serve the (labour) market;
 - ▶ *The so called Bologna-Process (as with its counterparts around the world) is aimed at implementing education systems that primarily train people in skills serving the labour market. It promotes the reduction of costs for training a person, shortens the length of time spent studying, and produces underqualified workforces.*
- turning education into a commodity as part of the commodification of all aspects of life
- the significant and increasing influence of business interests on basic budgets for public education
- the significant and increasing budget cuts on public education worldwide
- the privatisation of public funds through the subsidisation of private educational institutions
- the commodification and exploitation of labor within educational institutions
- We stand against discrimination and exclusion within any educational institution based on:
 - socio-economic background, for instance by charging fees so that people with less money can't participate equally
 - nationality
 - performance and academic record
 - political ideologies and activities
 - gender
 - sexual orientation
 - religion
 - ethnic background
 - skin colour
- We stand against the prioritisation of research towards commercially valuable patents rather than open knowledge freely available to all
 - Public educational institutions are increasingly forced to compete for private sponsorships to do (basic) research; at the same time private funds tend to be

invested into research promising to be profitable, leading to a decline in funding for areas of research which may be important but not deemed economically lucrative. Educational institutions and participants are evaluated on the basis of economic profitability and often compete to receive additional public funding based on this criteria.

- We stand against the prioritisation of income-generating research grants ahead of education and basic research
- Activities for the army within educational institutions:
 - no research specifically for military purposes
 - no recruiting and advertising activities for the army

What are we struggling for?

- **CONTENT:**
 - free and emancipatory education as a human right. Education should primarily work for the emancipation of the individual, which means: being enabled to critically reflect and understand the power structures and environment surrounding him-/herself. Education must not only enable the emancipation of the individual but society as a whole
 - education as a public good serving public interests
 - academic freedom and choice: freedom to pursue any educational discipline
- **ACCESS:**
 - free from monetary mechanisms of payment by participants and any kind of discrimination and exclusion and therefore freely accessible to all individuals
 - sufficient funding for all public educational institutions, whether they are deemed profitable or not
- **STRUCTURE:**
 - all educational entities/institutions should be democratically structured, meaning direct participation from below as a basis for decision making processes

Why on the local and global level?

The impacts of the current global economic system create struggles worldwide. While applying local pressure to influence our individual local/regional politics and legislation, we must always be aware of the global and structural nature of our problems and learn from each other's tactics, experiences in organizing, and theoretical knowledge. Short-term changes may be achieved on the local level, but great change will only happen if we unite globally.

Education systems worldwide do what they are intended to do within the economic and state system(s): select for, train and create ignorance and submission. We unite for a different education system and a different life.

We stand united against any sort of repression by governments worldwide directed at people involved in the struggle for free and emancipatory education.

The following groups and individuals support this statement, pledge to spread it, and to get actively involved in efforts to network and unite education activist groups worldwide in the future.

*Want to support this statement by having your (group) name listed below? Just send an e-mail to: **united.for.education@gmail.com***

~ one world - one struggle ~

At this stage this international joint statement is being endorsed by 100 groups in 43 countries around the world. It will also be the basis for the GLOBAL EDUCATION STRIKE (Oct.18th & Nov.14-21st 2012)!